1:Campbell E-5 (1954-1955)1964
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for these arrangements is public opinion.[1] The sanction However reluctant a man may be to hand over the reins to his son, he knows that he will lose less personal prestige by moving into retirement than by attempting to hold power against the conventions of customary usage. He is also aware that any temporizing over this problem will lead to the kind of friction with his son that is unlikely to remain private and may result in a further loss of prestige for the whole family.

There are two other circumstances which may help to persuade a father to cede his position at the customary time. Grazing land in summer for a herd of three hundred sheep and goats represents a considerable area of mountainous country. The journey from the huts of the family near the village to the farthest limits of the summer grazing is very often a walk of two or three hours, climbing steeply the whole way along difficult rock-strewn paths generally no wider than a rabbit's track. Such a journey two or three times a week for a man in his early sixties, which is the age a father is likely to have reached when his own son approaches the age of marriage, is a severe physical strain. But if the family head is not physically able to see for himself the condition of the grass and the state of his animals, his shepherd sons cease to treat his instructions or criticisms with any seriousness, and in respect to animal management virtually arrange matters for themselves. From this point it is a short step to question the father's authority in other matters. Physical or mental feebleness of the father is invariably the explanation of a son assuming control of family affairs at an early age.

The second circumstance has to do with the relation of the family to the outside world. With few exceptions the shepherds who are today over sixty years of age are illiterate. Under modern conditions these men are at an obvious disadvantage in understanding the content of government agricultural regulations and in filling up the increasing number of printed forms. Unlike their more sophisticated and literate sons, men of this age group do not understand the ways of minor officials. 'They don't know how to go about things in the offices' (δὲν ξέρουν τὰ γραφεῖα), their sons explain. In part, the prestige of letters is attributable to the idea that they are the necessary weapons for a successful resistance or adaption to bureaucratic

[1] i.e. the taking over of family authority by the son
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administration. It is easy to understand that if the head of the family must be constantly asking his young son to read, explain, and advise on all written documents, he finds it difficult to maintain his authority until his son has reached the customary age of marriage. Significantly, the sack in which the business papers and account books are kept has become in recent years a symbol of the authority of the head of family, who alone has the right to open it.

In the majority of cases, however, these two circumstances, although they may cause difficulties, do not force or even allow a father to hand over executive control much earlier than custom demands. If, for example, a father of fifty-nine hands over the control of family affairs to a son of twenty-six, he will undoubtedly be considered a man of weak character even where it is known that he suffers some physical disability. He must, for reasons of personal and family prestige, attempt to assert and exercise his authority. Sons are not unaware of the father's position and difficulties. During the last years of a father's exercise of power a degree of rivalry between a father and his sons is always present, but because fathers and sons, together, accept responsibility for the prestige of the family, they guard most carefully against any public expression of their differences.

After the eldest son assumes control, the father continues to do such work as he is capable of. It is generally a task of his own selection and the senior son is careful to avoid giving direct instructions of any kind to his father. There are always a few sick sheep or late lambs which need to be grazed close to the huts, and occasionally he will spend a day with one of the flocks to relieve a son. In some families with many sons, where there is no essential task for the old father to perform, he will create some activity to occupy his time. The old father of John Charisis daily saddles and exercises a favourite horse. When visitors ask where the old father is, his sons reply with affectionate but patronizing smiles that he is out with his horse again. The visitors join in the laughter at the old man's expense and the sons do not take offence, for this is a general attitude to old people in the community. They are respected if they have led honourable lives, yet in relation to present preoccupations they are unimportant. The old father always expresses his views